

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: 1978 COUNTRY REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN  
URUGUAY

REF: STATE 215083

### 1. SETTING.

UNTIL RECENTLY, URUGUAY ENJOYED AN EXCELLENT INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION BECAUSE OF ITS TRADITION OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND ADVANCED SOCIAL POLICIES. BEGINNING IN THE MID-1960'S URUGUAYAN INSTITUTIONS CAME UNDER ATTACK FROM THE TUPAMAROS, A LEFTIST URBAN TERRORIST GROUP. THE TUPAMAROS' EARLY REFORMIST PRETENTIONS SOON DEGENERATED INTO TERRORISM MARKED BY ASSASSINATIONS, KIDNAPPING, BOMBINGS, AND OTHER ACTS OF VIOLENCE. THIS CAMPAIGN WAS OPENLY COMMITTED TO THE DESTRUCTION OF EXISTING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

EXISTING CIVIL INSTITUTIONS HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY IN COPING WITH THIS UNUSUAL CHALLENGE AND, IN EARLY 1972, RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ANTI-TERRORIST EFFORT WAS TRANSFERRED FROM THE POLICE AND CIVILIAN COURTS TO THE MILITARY AND A MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM, OPERATING UNDER EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES. THIS  
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CHANGE WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITHIN LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS. IT INCLUDED A CIVIL-RIGHTS WATCHDOG ROLE FOR URUGUAY'S CONGRESS.

INCREASING DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH AND THE MILITARY OVER THE CONDUCT OF THE ANTI-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN LED TO CLOSURE OF THE LEGISLATURE IN JUNE 1973.

THEREAFTER, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH GOVERNED BY DECREE AND THE ANTI-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN WAS CONDUCTED WITHOUT ANY EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT. ALTHOUGH THE TUPAMAROS WERE THOROUGHLY REPUDIATED BY THE MASS OF URUGUAYANS, AND ELIMINATED AS AN EFFECTIVE THREAT BY 1973-74, THE MILITARY REMOVED THE CONSTITUTIONALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT IN JUNE 1976 AND IMPOSED A HARSH AUTHORITARIAN REGIME. THIS HAS INCLUDED SUPPRESSION OF ALL POLITICAL ACTIVITIES; SUSPENSION OF THE PARTIES AND "PROSCRIPTION" OF HUNDRES OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL LEADERS; SEVERE RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION; ELIMINATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY; AND INTIMIDATION OF LEGAL PROFESSION.

THE PRINCIPAL JUSTIFICATION FOR AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN THE CONINUING SEARCH FOR "SUBVERSIVES". THIS LED TO A SECOND WAVE OF DETENTIONS, LARGELY OCCURING IN 1975-77, WHICH CONCENTRATED ON ACTIVISTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND OTHER FAR-LEFT POLITICAL GROUPS. MANY MEMBERS OF THESE GROUPS WERE APPARENTLY ARRESTED, EX POST FACTO, FOR PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WHICH WERE CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED WHEN CARRIED OUT. DIRNG THIS PERIOD, LARGELY BECAUSE OF ACCUSATIONS LODGED AGAINST THE MILITARY REGIME BY EXILES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, CRITICISM OF URUGUAY'S CONTINUED SUPPRESSION OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND USE OF TORTURE, IN THE NAME OF COMBATTING SUBVERSION BECAME WIDESPREAD. ALTHOUGH THE URUGUAYAN GOVERN- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENT HAS CONSISTENTLY DENIED THAT TORTURE AND OTHER INHUMANE PRACTICES ARE OFFICIALLY CONDONED, IT HAS FAILED TO MAKE ITS CASE CONVINCINGLY OR TO PERMIT INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED ORGANIZATIONS TO INVESTIGATE SUCH CHARGES.

DURING 1978 THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATED GREATER OFFICIAL SENSITIVITY TO THIS CRITICISM AND MOVED TOWARD SOME OPENNESS. THERE ALSO WAS A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN REPORTS OF NEW DETENTIONS AND ALLEGED MISTREATMENT. CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO REITERATE THE PLEDGE, ORIGINALLY MADE IN AUGUST 1977, THAT CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AND CIVILIAN RULE WILL BE RESTORED THROUGH ELECTIONS IN 1981. ALTHOUGH FEW CONCRETE STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO DATE, THE URUGUAYAN TRADITION OF CIVIC GUARANTEES AND RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS OFFERS THE HOPE FOR RETURN TO A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

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2. RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING  
FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE.

TORTURE WAS USED EXTENSIVELY IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TUPAMARO TERRORISTS AND LATER ROUNDUP OF COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS AND FAR-LEFT POLITICAL MILITANTS. THERE IS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT IT WAS STILL BEING USED THROUGH 1977, ALTHOUGH DECREASINGLY, IN THE INTERROGATION STAGE. DURING 1978 THERE WERE ONLY A FEW REPORTS ALLEGING TORTURE, INDICATING THAT INTERNAL MEASURES TAKEN BY URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES TO ELIMINATE ITS USE ARE BEING RESPECTED. A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL GROUP HAVE CHARGED IN THE PAST THAT TORTURE WAS WIDESPREAD IN URUGUAY BUT IN THE PAST YEAR THESE CHARGES WERE LIMITED TO A FEW ISOLATED CASES.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.

INTIMIDATION OF DETAINEES THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE DURING THE PERIOD OF INTERROGATIONS IS STILL ROUTINE. PRISONERS DETAINED BY THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES ARE OFTEN ISOLATED, HOODED, THREATENED, KEPT STANDING FOR EXTENSIVE PERIODS AND CONFINED IN AREAS KEPT CONSTANTLY ILLUMINATED. DURING THE PAST YEAR THE POLICE WERE ORDERED TO CEASE SUCH PRACTICES AND THIS ORDER IS

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APPARENTLY BEING RESPECTED. THE ACTIVITIES OF MILITARY UNITS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE SAME COORDINATE RESTRAINTS. PRISONERS ARE KEPT INCOMMUNICADO DURING THIS INVESTIGATION PHASE WHICH MAY RUN FROM A FEW DAYS TO SEVERAL MONTHS AND NO NOTICE OF THEIR

ARREST, WHEREABOUTS OR STATE OF HEALTH IS PROVIDED TO FAMILY MEMBERS. THIS PERIOD DURING WHICH PRISONERS ARE KEPT INCOMMUNICADO ACCOUNTS FOR MOST REPORTS OF DISAPPEARANCES. ONCE THE INVESTIGATORY STAGE IS COMPLETED AND A DETAINEE'S CASE IS REFERRED TO A MILITARY JUDGE FOR A PRELIMINARY HEARING, HIS TREATMENT IMPROVES MARKEDLY. PRISON CONDITIONS ARE RELATIVELY HUMANE AND ARE SOMEWHAT BETTER FOR POLITICAL DETAINEES THAN FOR COMMON CRIMINALS. SUPERVISION IS STRICT BUT PRISONERS ARE NOT MISTREATED BY GUARDS.

C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT.

HABEAS CORPUS CORPUS AND OTHER CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AGAINST ARBITRARY DETENTION WERE SUSPENDED BY LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE MILITARY TO ARREST AND TRY PERSONS SUSPECTED OF "SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES" (NATIONAL SECURITY LAW OF 1972 AND THE EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES OF 1973, FURTHER AMPLIFIED IN 1975). HOWEVER, INSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS AGAINST BASUSE WERE NULLIFIED WITH THE MILITARY'S SEIZURE OF POWER IN 1973. THE DEFINITION OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY HAS BEEN EXPANDED TO INCLUDE OFFENSES SUCH AS UNDERMINING TH MORALE OF MILITARY FORCES AND DISRESPECT TO MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT STATISTICS RELEASED IN JUNE 1978 INDICATE THAT 5602 PERSONS HAD BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN APRIL 1972. THIS CORRESPONDS CLOSELY TO ESTIMATES OF 5-6,000 POLITICAL DETAINEES FREQUENTLY CITED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. OF THIS NUMBER, THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMS THAT 1182 WERE SUBSEQUENTLY FREED WITHOUT TRIAL, AND 2511 OTHERS FREED BY JUDICIAL ORDER FOR VARIOUS REASONS (AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF THEM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONDITIONALLY). ON THE BASIS OF THESE STATISTICS 1909 DETAINEES WOULD CURRENTLY BE UNDER JURISDICTION OF MILITARY COURTS, EITHER SERVING SENTENCE OR AWAITING TRIAL. IN ADDITION, AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF PERSONS ARE DETAINED IN THE INVESTIGATORY PHASE AWAITING FORMAL CHARGES.

THE GOVERNMENT REFUSES FOR SECURITY REASONS TO MAKE AN ACCOUNTING OF THOSE UNDER INVESTIGATION. URUGUAYAN OFFICIALS INDICATE INFORMALLY THAT THERE ARE LESS THAN 100, ALTHOUGH SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THERE MAY BE AS MANY AS SEVERAL HUNDRED IN CUSTODY AT ANY GIVEN TIME. THUS, PENDING AN OFFICIAL ACCOUNTING, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DETAINEES, INCLUDING THOSE UNDER INVESTIGATION, IS CURRENTLY PRESUMED TO BE IN THE RANGE OF 2000 TO 2500.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

POLITICAL OFFENSES ARE TRIED IN MILITARY COURTS UNDER MILITARY LAW. THE URUGUAYAN COURT SYSTEM UNDER BOTH THE ORDINARY PENAL CODE (OPC) AND THE MILITARY PENAL CODE (MPC) RELIES ON WRITTEN PROCEEDINGS IN PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGA-

TION, ARRAIGNMENT, TRIAL, AND SENTENCING STAGES OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS. TERRORISM, SUBVERSION AND OTHER "CRIMES AGAINST THE NATION" ARE SUBJECT TO THE MPC. CONFSSIONAL

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EVIDENCE HAS BEEN THE BASIS FOR ALMOST ALL CONVICTIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY OFFENSES. IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR A JUDGE, WHO RULES ON THE BASIS OF WRITTEN BRIEFS, CIVIL OR MILITARY, NEVER TO CONFRONT THE ACCUSED FACE-TO-FACE, EXCEPT AT ARRAIGNMENT AND SENTENCING. THE EVIDENCE, ARGUMENTS AND RECORDS OF SUCH PROCEEDINGS UNDE OPC AND MPC ARE NOT OPEN TO PUBLIC OR PRESS, THOUGH THE MPC APPEALS PROCESS PROVIDES FOR APUBLIC HEARING.

STANDARDS OF EVIDENCE, ESPECIALLY CONFSSIONAL EVIDENCE, ARE LESS RIGOROUS UNDER THE MPC AND ATTORNEYS HAVE GENERALLY LESS OPPORTUNITY FOR AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE. THE EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES REQUIRE THAT DETAINEES BE TURNED OVER TO A MILITARY JUDGE WITHIN TEN DAYS, BUT IN ACTUAL PRACTICE THERE ARE LENGTHY DELAYS BOTH IN INFORMING THE ACCUSED OF PRECISE CHARGES AND IN COMMENCING JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS (THE OPC REQUIRES A FORMAL CHARGE WITHIN 24 HOURS AND THE INITIATION OF PROCEEDINGS WITHIN 48). IN RECENT MONTHS, URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO SPEED THE WORK OF THE MILITARY COURT SYSTEM AND CLEAR ITS DOCKETS.

ATTORNEYS ARE NOT PERMITTED ACCESS TO THEIR CLIENTS DURING THE PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION (UNDER EITHER THE MPC OR OPC). ONCE THE ACCUSED IS TURNED OVER TO A MILITARY JUDGE FOR POSSIBLE ARRAIGNMENT, LAWYERS ARE PERMITTED ACCESS  
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TO THEIR CLIENTS BUT ONLY IN THE PRESENCE OF THE AUTHORITIES.  
(LAWYERS SEE CLIENTS IN PRIVATE UNDER THE OPC).

PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM  
SOMETIMES CONTINUE TO BE HELD OR ARE REARRESTED ON NEW  
CHARGES AFTER COMPLETING THEIR SENTENCE.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME.

UNDER THE CURRENT EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES,  
GUARANTEES WITH RESPECT TO INVIOABILITY OF THE HOME OF  
PERSONS WHO ARE SUSPECTED OF TERRORISM, SUBVERSION OR  
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST THE NATION ARE SUSPENDED. WHOLESALE  
RAIDS, AS IN THE TUPAMARO PERIOD AND THE SUBSEQUENT ROUND-  
UPS OF COMMUNISTS, HAVE SUBSIDED. CURRENTLY, INVASION  
OF HOMES BY SECURITY FORCES ARE INFREQUENT AND REPORTEDLY  
DO NOT INVOLVE LOOTING OR OTHER ABUSES.

3. GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF  
SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND  
EDUCATION.

PER CAPITA INCOME FOR THIS GENERALLY MIDDLE-CLASS  
COUNTRY IS ABOUT \$1,390, HIGH FOR THE REGION. MORTALITY  
RATES AND OTHER HEALTH INDICES CONTINUE AMONG THE MOST  
FAVORABLE IN LATIN AMERICA. DESPITE INFLATION, OCCASIONAL  
SHORTAGES AND A CONTINUING REDUCTION OF REAL INCOME, THE  
MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION IS ADEQUATELY FED. THERE ARE  
VARIOUS GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED COMMUNITY FEEDING PROGRAMS  
FOR THE POOR. HOUSING IS GENERALLY ADEQUATE AND THE  
GOVERNMENT HAS ALLOTTED SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES FOR  
SUBSIDIZED HOUSING TO MIDDLE AND LOWER CLASSES. HEALTH  
CARE IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE ENTIRE POPULATION, FREE TO THE  
POOR (WITH NOMINAL COSTS FOR OTHERS) AND ADEQUATE. LIKE-  
WISE, PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE UNIVER-  
SITY LEVEL ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE ENTIRE POPULATION.

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IN RECENT YEARS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES HAVE FOCUSED  
ON THE PRODUCTIVE SECTORS, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY,  
WHOSE PAST STAGNATION HAS MADE SUSTAINING INCOMES AND  
SOCIAL PROGRAMS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT. URUGUAY'S RECENT  
FISCAL IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AT A SOCIAL  
COST WHICH LOWER INCOME GROUPS WERE LEAST ABLE TO BEAR,  
BUT INCOME DISTRIBUTION REMAINS AMONG THE MOST EQUITABLE  
IN THE HEMISPHERE.

4. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION AND ASSEMBLY.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS CONTINUES TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY RESTRICTED, ALTHOUGH IN RECENT MONTHS AUTHORITIES HAVE SHOWN A GROWING TOLERANCE FOR CONTROVERSIAL NEWS AND MORE LIBERAL EDITORIAL COMMENT ON HITHERTO FORBIDDEN TOPICS SUCH AS CONSTITUTIONAL, JUDICIAL AND POLITICAL PARTY REFORM. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT ACTIONS, LIMITED PRIMARILY TO THE ECONOMIC SPHERE, IS STILL CAUTIOUS AND RESTRAINED. NO UNFAVORABLE COMMENT ON THE ARMED FORCES IS TOLERATED. THE MEDIA OPERATES UNDER A SYSTEM OF SELF CENSORSHIP WITH GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED BY THE AUTHORITIES.

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UNDER THE EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES, NO DISCUSSION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IS PERMITTED BEYOND OFFICIAL RELEASES.

NO MAJOR OFFICIAL ACTIONS AGAINST THE PRESS WERE RECORDED IN 1978, ALTHOUGH TEMPORARY CLOSINGS AND EXPULSIONS HAVE OCCURRED IN THE PST. THERE WERE CONTINUING BUT LESS FREQUENT OCCASIONS OF THREATENED SANCTIONS AND OTHER OFFICIAL PRESSURES SUCH AS WITHHOLDING OF OFFICIAL ADVERTISING.

ON OCCASION, HASTILY IMPOSED SANCTIONS HAVE BEEN REVERSED. THE GOVERNMENT GENERALLY RESPECTS CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. THERE HAVE BEEN CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND LIBERAL CHURCH-AFFILIATED GROUPS AND, MORE RECENTLY, FORCED DISMISSALS OF TEACHERS IN CHURCH-RUN AND OTHER PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, ALTHOUGH STILL CONTROLLED, IS

NOW SOMEWHAT LESS SEFERELY RESTRICTED. POLITICAL MEETINGS ARE PROHIBITED ALTHOUGH THE GRADITIONAL, NON-MARXIST PARTIES HAVE SPONSORED A FEW MEMORIAL EVENTS WITHOUT INCURRING REPRISALS. MEETINGS AND THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF ALL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRE ADVANCE APPROVAL BY SECURITY AUTHORITIES. HOWEVER, OBVIOUSLY NON-POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ARE GENERALLY CONDUCTED WITHOUT INTERFERENCE.

ALL MARXIST-CONTROLLED LABOR UNIONS WERE DISSOLVED IN 1973 AND REMAINING UNIONS SEVERLY CURTAILED. OFFICIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPROVAL WAS REQUIRED FOR ALL MEETINGS, AGENDAS AND THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS. ORGANIZING ACTIVITY AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WERE SEVERLY RESTRICTED AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE EFFECTIVELY SUSPENDED. IN JANUARY 1978 THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO PREPARE LEGISLATION LIBERALIZING THE CONDUCT OF TRADE UNION ACTIVITY. IN JUNE A SERIES OF "GUIDELINES" FOR THIS LEGISLATION WAS ANNOUNCED AN AN EXPERT DRAFTING COMMITTEE APPOINTED. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN, THE LAW WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE IN 1979. MEANWHILE, AUTHORITIES HAVE GIVEN GROWING RECOGNITION TO THE NEED FOR A LEGITIMATE, DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, AND ARE PERMITTING INCREASED TRAINING AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY.

INSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. 7, ADOPTED IN JULY 1977, GIVES THE GOVERNMENT SWEEPING AUTHORITY TO TERMINATE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, PREVIOUSLY GUARANTEED VIRTUALLY PERMANENT JOB SECURITY. ALTHOUGH DESIGNED ALLEGEDLY TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, IT HAS BEEN USED TO PURGE EMPLOYEES SUSPECTED OF SUBVERSIVE POLITICAL BELIEFS, OFTEN ON THE BASIS OF FLIMSY EVIDENCE. ESTIMATES VARY WIDELY AS TO ITS IMPACT, BUT HUNDREDS HAVE BEEN FIRED, MANY OF THEM IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

#### B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION

THERE ARE NO GENERAL RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN URUGUAY, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION. IN MOST CASES, HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DENIED PERSONS DETAINED FOR POLITICAL OFFENSES THE EXERCISE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY INSTEAD OF SERVING THEIR SENTENCES. FOREIGN TRAVEL, EMIGRATION, AND THE RENEWAL OF PASSPORTS FOR CITIZENS LIVING OVERSEAS, HAVE BEEN DENIED TO PERSONS SUSPECTED OF PAST OR PRESENT "UNDESIRABLE ASSOCIATION".

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C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS.

FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS DOES NOT NOW EXIST. INSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. 4 HAS DEPRIVED THOUSANDS OF PERSONS, INCLUDING MOST ADKNOWLEDGED LEADERS OF OOE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES, OF THEIR POLITICAL RIGHTS FOR UP TO 15 YEARS. WHILE THEIR HEADQUARTERS REMAIN OPEN AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES RETAIN ELECTED OFFICERS, THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

4. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

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OFFICIAL URUGUAYAN ATTITUDES TOWARD INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HAVE VARIED CONSIDERABLY. IN 1974, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS WERE PERMITTED TO MAKE A JOINT ON-SITE INVESTIGATION. UNTIL 1976, THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO VISIT PRISONERS. THEREAFTER, THE GOVERNMENT CAME TO VIEW THE ACTIVITIES OF ALL INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS BOTH PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL AS INIMICAL TO ITS INTERESTS AND ADOPTED A HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD THEM.

TWO ON-SITE INVESTIGATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO), THE MOST RECENT IN 1977, WERE EXCEPTIONS. THIS HOSTILITY WAS PARTICULARLY INTENSE TOWARD AMENESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE OAS'S INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (IAHRC). THE COMPETENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LATTERE WERE ATTACKED DESPITE THE

COMMISSION'S ESTABLISHED ROLE IN THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM.

DURING 1978, THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT ADOPTED A MORE MODERATE ATTITUDE, EVEN TAKING FIRST STEPS TO BREACH ITS DIFFERENCES WITH THE IAHRC. IT RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO INQUIRIES MADE IN THE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND HAS CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH THE ILO. DISCUSSIONS OPENED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS MAY LEAD TO A RESUMPTION OF ITS ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF PRISONERS. IN MARCH 1978, AN OFFICE WAS OPENED TO RESPOND TO UNOFFICIAL FOREIGN INQUIRIES ABOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DETAINEES. A GREATER READINESS TO RECEIVE FOREIGN PRIVATE GROUPS IS BEING SHOWN, MOST NOTABLY TO AN APRIL 1978 MISSION SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION. THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS POINTED OUT SERIOUS BREACHES IN THE RULE OF LAW, INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY AND LEGAL PROFESSION, AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED. THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PUBLISH THESE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE LOCAL PRESS WAS EVIDENCE OF A NEW OPENNESS, AS WAS ITS COMMITMENT TO THE ABA MISSION TO TAKE POSITIVE MEASURES.  
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## Message Attributes

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